

We claim:

1. An elevator apparatus for manipulating well bore tubing having a collar, comprising:

5 a circular body having a top and a central cavity around a body axis, the cavity having a diameter allowing the collar portion of tubing to pass longitudinally therethrough,

10 a plurality of cavity restricting members above the body supported on and spaced apart around the top of the body and having proximal and distal portions in respect to the cavity, and

15 one or more actuators operatively associated with the cavity restricting members, for moving the proximal portion of each cavity restricting member into the cavity an extent sufficient, in combination with the other cavity restricting members so moved, to prevent passage of the collar portion of the tubing through the cavity, thereby to hold the tubing with the elevator.

20 2. The elevator apparatus of claim 1 in which said one or more actuators also operate to retract the proximal portions of the cavity restricting members out of the cavity, to allow the collar portion of the tubing to pass through the cavity.

25 3. A method of manipulating well bore tubing having a

collar, comprising:

introducing the tubing into the cavity of a circular body having a central cavity of diameter to admit therethrough a collar portion of the tubing,

5 positioning said body below the collar portion of the tubing, and

moving the proximal portions of a plurality of cavity restricting members supported on and spaced apart around the top of the body and having proximal and distal portions in respect to the cavity, into the cavity an extent sufficient to prevent passage of the collar portion of the tubing through the cavity.

4. The method of claim 3 further comprising retracting the proximal portions of the cavity restricting members out of the cavity, to allow the collar portion of the tubing to pass through the cavity.